

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

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R 162117Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9829

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

USCINCSO

CONFIDENTIAL SAN SALVADOR 5156

USCINCSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PGOV ES SHUM PORS PINS

SUBJECT: TWO VIOLENT INCIDENTS DISRUPT OTHERWISE PEACEFUL HOLIDAY
SEASON

REF: (A) SAN SALVADOR 4967

(B) SAN SALVADOR 4580

(C) SAN SALVADOR 3949

1. THE POLITICAL TRANQUILITY THAT HAS REIGNED SOMEWHAT UNEXPECTEDLY SINCE THE EL CARMEN POLICE POST RAID AND ASSASSINATION OF OPPOSITION DEPUTY RAFAEL AGUINADA CARRANZA IN SEPTEMBER, (SAN SALVADOR 3949), AND THE NOVEMBER 2ND RADIO STATION TAKEOVERS AND BOMBINGS OF 3 OPPOSITION ORGANIZATION BUILDINGS (SAN SALVADOR 4580) WAS ABRUPTLY SHATTERED BY TWO VIOLENT INCIDENTS ON DECEMBER 15. SEEMINGLY UNRELATED, BOTH RESULTED IN DEATHS AND BOTH MIGHT LEAD TO FURTHER VIOLENCE AND RETALIATIONS. A SECOND COMMON INGREDIENT IS A LACK OF CLARITY AS TO THE PERPETRATORS OR REAL MOTIVES BEHIND THE TWO INCIDENTS.

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2. THE FIRST EVENT, AS YET KNOWN PRINCIPALLY FROM NEWSPAPER

ACCOUNTS, INVOLVED A CONFRONTATION BETWEEN UP TO 600 CAMPESINOS AND GOVERNMENT SECURITY FORCES ON THE JANTA BARBARA HACIENDA AND SUGAR REFINERY, LOCATED BETWEEN THE VILLAGES OF SANTA BARBARA AND EL PARAISO IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CHALATENANGO. THE LA PRENSA GRAFICA ACCOUNT CLAIMED ONE NATIONAL POLICEMAN WAS KILLED, ONE POLICEMAN AND ONE NATIONAL GUARDSMAN WOUNDED AND SEVEN CIVILIANS REQUIRED HOSPITALIZATION. THE NEWS ACCOUNTS, QUOTING A BULLETIN ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL POLICE, CLAIMED THE DISPUTE STARTED WHEN OUTSIDE AGITATORS ARRIVED WITH A SOUNDTRUCK AND CALLED ON THE CAMPESINOS TO REFUSE TO WORK. THE LANDOWNERS CALLED FOR POLICE ASSISTANCE, AND WHEN IT ARRIVED THE FIGHT STARTED. A SECOND VERSION HAS THE CAMPESINOS CALLING A HALT TO WORK UNTIL THEIR DEMANDS FOR THE MINIMUM WAGE WERE MET.

COMMENT - TITO CASTRO, TECHNICAL ADVISOR TO THE UNION COMUNAL SALVADORENA (UCS) TOLD POLOFF THAT, DESPITE THE CHARGE THAT SEVERAL OF THE WOUNDED CAMPESINOS PROFESS THEY ARE UCS MEMBERS, THIS IS UNTRUE. HE SAID THE INCIDENT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY PROVOKED BY THOSE LEFTISTS WHO WISH TO USE CAMPESINO DISORDERS TO PROVOKE AND EMBARRASS THE GOES. TITO REMINDED THE REPORTING OFFICER THAT THE UCS HAD PREDICTED THAT EVEN, (PERHAPS ESPECIALLY) IF THE UCS DECEMBER 4 MARCH (SAN SALVADOR 4967) WAS A SUCCESS AND RESULTED IN THE GOES MEETING CAMPESINO DEMANDS FOR ACCESS TO NATIONAL LANDS AND CREDIT, THERE WOULD STILL BE LAND INVASIONS AND OTHER TURMOILS, MOST LIKELY BLOODY, GENERATED BY FAR LEFT ELEMENTS WHO WOULD PREFER NOT TO SEE A UCS-GOVERNMENT ACCOMMODATION. CASTRO SPECIFICALLY IDENTIFIED THE ALAS BROTHERS, PRIESTS OF SUCHITOTO, AS THE MOST LIKELY CANDIDATES TO TRY SUCH TACTICS, SINCE THEY WOULD HAVE TO PROVE THAT THE UCS STRATEGY HAD NOT SUCCEEDED, WHEN IN FACT IT HAD. CASTRO SAID HE HAD WARNED THE PRESIDENT OF THIS DANGER, AND HE INTERPRETS YESTERDAY'S VIOLENCE AS THE FIRST PROOF OF THE ACCURACY OF HIS PREDICTION. HE CLAIMS THAT UCS HAS NEVER BEEN STRONG IN CHALATENANGO, PRINCIPALLY BECAUSE THE AREA IS A REDOUBT OF SUPPORT FOR THE ALAS BROTHERS. END COMMENT

3. THE SECOND VIOLENT OCCURRENCE ON DECEMBER 15 WAS THE ASSASSINATION IN SAN SALVADOR OF THREE NATIONAL GUARDMEN BY FOUR MASKED ASSAILANTS, IN FRONT OF THE DOWNTOWN NATIONAL PRICE STABILIZATION INSTITUTE. THE SECURITY AGENTS WERE GUNNED DOWN, AS THEY GOT OUT OF THEIR JEEP, APPARENTLY WITHOUT WARNING. THE EL DIARIO DE HOY VERSION STATED THAT SUBVERSIVE

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LEAFLETS LEFT AT THE SITE CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE
ERP (PEOPLES REVOLUTIONARY ARMY).

MOSKOWITZ

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